

# The Courier-Journal

## Group helps Marine in Iraq serve in wedding



The wedding of Keryn Christie and Timothy Foye included Marine Cpl. Daniel Foye as best man, via the video screen in the background. (By Byron Crawford, The Courier-Journal)

One of the Marines' fabled "few good men" became a world-class best man in the time it took a satellite signal to beam his voice and picture from an outpost in western Iraq, halfway around the planet, to Frankfort, Ky.

Timothy Foye, 26, of Lexington, had already decided there would be no best man at the ceremony if his brother, Marine Cpl. Daniel Foye, 29, could not serve as best man at his wedding to Keryn Christie in a garden at Buffalo Trace Distillery.

"Tim said, 'I'm not replacing him; he's still going to be the best man, and since he can't be here, I'll just have an empty spot,' " said their sister, Alison Snider, of

Florence, Ky. "So about three weeks ago -- at one or two o'clock in the morning -- I was up trying to figure out how Dan could be a part of the wedding. I got on the Internet and started searching, and found Freedom Calls."

Within a few hours, Snider's e-mail request for help was answered by Freedom Calls Foundation executive director and founder John Harlow in New York.

"He e-mailed me back and said, 'Let's make it happen.' "

At sunset Friday, Cpl. Foye, dressed in desert camouflage, listened and watched, smiling from a 6-foot video screen, as his brother and the bride exchanged vows before some 100 guests. A small wireless camera and computer hookup, engineered by Buffalo Trace technical director Paul Maier, enabled family and friends to have two-way video conversations with the Marine military policeman before the ceremony and during the reception.

"I wish I could jump through the screen, honestly," Cpl. Foye said. "I just want to thank the people involved for making it possible. This works. It's one of the most amazing things that I've experienced in my life -- being so far away, yet being connected this way. It's basically like being there, conversing and being able to see all my family and friends. It's overwhelming, almost."

Tim Foye's voice broke with emotion as he talked with his brother before the ceremony, describing him as "the best brother anyone could ever have."

Freedom Calls was created as a public charity, authorized by the Department of the Army and operated largely through donations from individuals and corporations, to provide free, state-of-the-art video, telephone and Internet service to American troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

More than 30,000 U.S. troops in Iraq's Sunni Triangle and surrounding areas have 24-hour access to Freedom Calls' services.

"We do over a million minutes a month of free phone calls and over a thousand video conferences," Harlow said. "We did the Louisville-Kentucky game, and next weekend we're doing the Kentucky Derby."

To learn more about Freedom Calls Foundation, go to [www.freedomcalls.org](http://www.freedomcalls.org)

Byron Crawford's column appears on the Metro page Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays. You can reach him at (502) 582-4791 or e-mail him at [bcrawford@courier-journal.com](mailto:bcrawford@courier-journal.com). You can also read his columns at [www.courier-journal.com](http://www.courier-journal.com).